Huddersfield Local History Society

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Huddersfield

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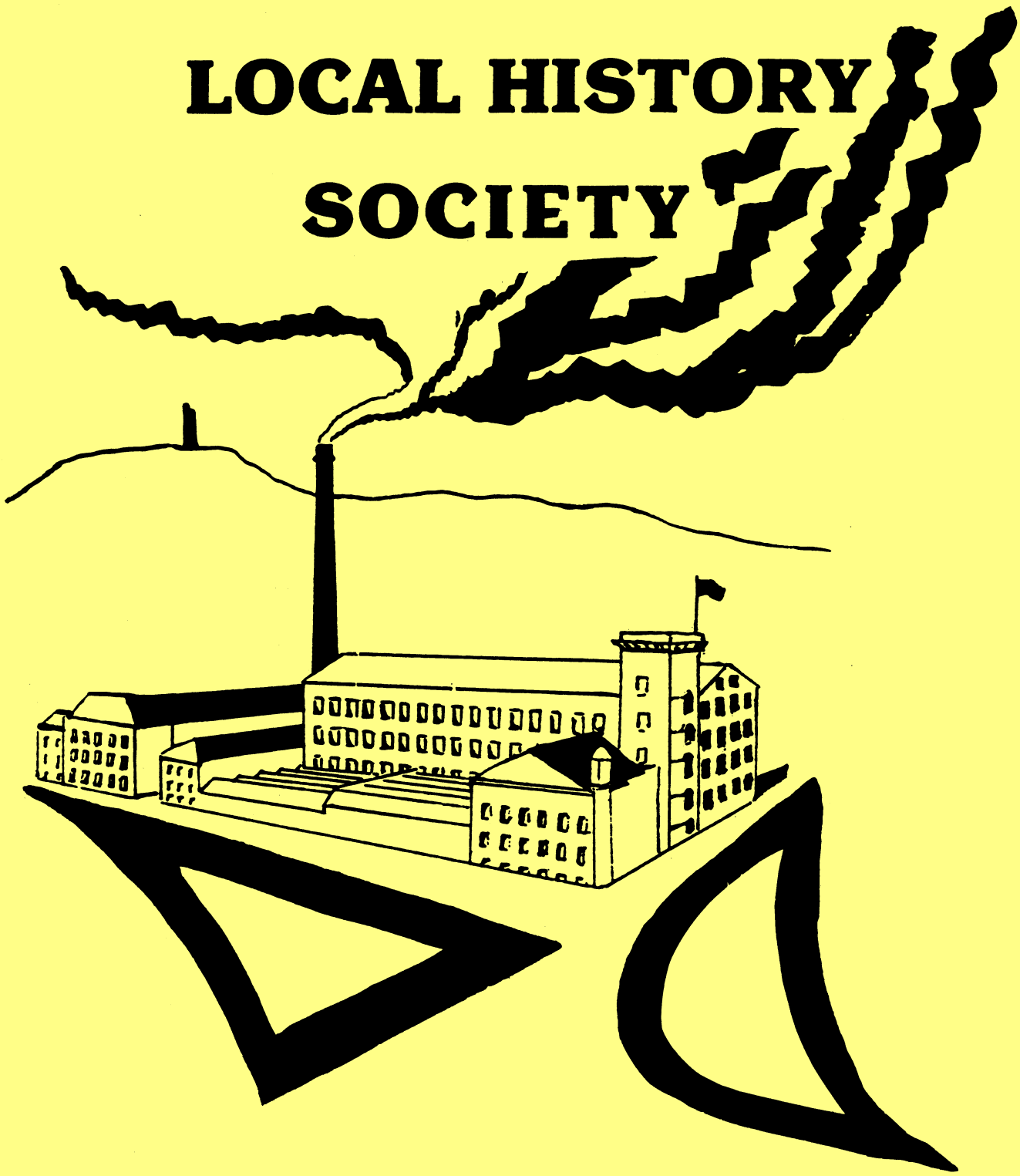


JOURNAL

No. 13 WINTER 2002/2003

A VICTORIAN DOCTOR

Betty Eagles looks into her great grandfather's diary

THE Society's October Study Day, on various medical topics, sent us back home eager to turn again to one of our most treasured possessions, the diary of my great grandfather, Frank Holmes. Around 50 years ago his daughter, my great aunt, was a patient in a nursing home in Huddersfield. Bryan was attending her, and just before she died, she pressed into his hands two battered volumes. These were the diaries written 1862-64 by her father, Frank Holmes, when he was a medical student, studying at the Royal School of Medicine in Manchester, and at Manchester Infirmary.

But these were not the main places where he learned his trade. Throughout his student days he worked as an apprentice to a local general practitioner, living in the doctor's house. He qualified in 1865, and thereafter practised in Manchester for more than 60 years. He was still seeing occasional patients when I went with my father to see him , as a five year old. My father repeatedly urged him to give up; he regarded his diagnoses as uncertain and his methods of treatment as archaic.

Not only did he qualify as a doctor; he also set up a dynasty of doctors. His younger brother and his nephew qualified in Manchester and worked there. His second daughter married a Scottish doctor who was already practising in Manchester. Their son, my father also learned his trade in Manchester, as did Bryan and I. The only difference was that the two of us and my father, moved over the Pennines to work in the Holme Valley.

Long ago we had great fun in transcribing the diaries. They are essentially personal documents. There is a great deal about arguments with the doctor with whom he was living and working. There are family matters, and a number of accounts of flirtations with various Victorian lasses who crossed his path. He even became engaged to one of them, but she broke it off. My great grandmother came later, and there is no account of her in the diaries.

But there are of course accounts of some of the patients he saw, and the tasks required of him. In January 1863 he and some of his fellow students were called on night and day for three days. Their job was to maintain pressure on one of the main leg arteries of a patient. He had developed an aneurism, a swelling on the blood vessel which was in danger of bursting. At that time the Infirmary was situated, not where it is now, but in the very centre of the city. This is part of great grandfather's account:

> This ward is a corner one on the top story of the building with two windows looking out on to the Queen Hotel. It is almost square, perhaps ten yards, and quite as high. Arched roof. Painted from top to bottom. Very well ventilated. Close to my right is a poor fellow with a stone ; they are going to operate on him on Friday. Opposite me is a man with a tracheotomy in his trachea. Had it for several months, cannot breathe through his mouth or nostrils. Cannot speak without placing fingers over mouth of tube, Each bed is an iron one, about five feet wide, by the side of which is a night commode like a box. Over each bed is a small wire shelf for holding medicine bottles, and a Bible and card of prayers for each man. Each have a jug of water within reach. A good fire is kept. The night nurse keeps going her rounds attending to any of their wants.

The constant pressure on the patient's leg , kept up by the students , each doing a quarter of an

hour at a time, was gradually succeeding...

> The patient now sleeps, for the first time for 24 hours. He has had opium, and it causes him to sleep very restless, continually jumping. Am glad to say the treatment appears to be succeeding, the pulsation of the tumour is barely perceptible.

But there were some compensations in this boring course of duty:

> Here I am in the nurses' roan at the Infirmary. One of them is making me some toast and tea.

Frank did not see the ultimate outcome of the treatment; the doctor to whom he was apprenticed was not willing to do without him any longer:

> I had to decline the going the third night to the Infirmary, as the doctor did not like me doing so. And if there had happened to be a call during my absence, I should never have heard the last of it.

One of the most moving accounts in the diary is the record of a midwifery case he attended; this tragic case had a powerful influence on him for the rest of his life:

> Feel very sad tonight. Have been called to see a poor woman who has been attended by an ignorant midwife, and found her dead. I knew her before, have been attending one of the family. They are pretty well off. She has left a large family, and was knocking about yesterday. Completely lost from neglect; flooded away without any effort to save her. It is a pity LAW does not necessitate midwives to be qualified before they are allowed to deal with life and death.

When he qualified Frank Holmes put his ideas in practice, and became a pioneer for the proper training of midwives. The Victorians were reluctant to legislate on the issue; childbirth was not considered a proper subject for public discussion. In our dining room at home we have a biscuit casket in silver gilt, and on the wall nearby there is a framed illuminated address which reads as follows:

> Presented to Mr. Frank Holmes M.R.C.S. together with a biscuit casket by the midwives of West Gorton in grateful remembrance of his many acts of kindness in assisting them professionally and also as acknowledgement of the time and labour spent by him in the organising and delivery of a course of lectures for their instruction in the art of midwifery.

The address is dated 1878. This antedates by a quarter of a century the law which Frank advocated in 1864. The Midwives Act did not come into force until 1902. His lectures to the midwives of West Gorton even came before the action of a group of determined women who, in 1881 , founded the Midwives Institute, later to become the College of Midwives. Frank was a true pioneer.

KEEPING THE WOLF FROM THE DOOR

Relief of the poor in Victorian Wooldale

FOR several centuries, the spectre of the workhouse haunted many people's lives. Today, they are probably best remembered as large, stern, vaguely Dickensian Institutions, run with inhuman efficiency by remote Boards of Guardians. Prior to 1834, and for some years of re-organisation afterwards, however, the Poor Law was run on less formal and truly parochial lines. Under the "Old Poor Law", relief could be provided in different forms, some "outdoor" and some "indoor", and it was run by the parish (or in this area of large rural parishes, the older, smaller unit of the township).
A small book of such township Minutes, surviving from the Township of Wooldale, offers some insights into the work of such communities at a time when, if hardship befell a neighbour, the more prosperous citizens really did become "their brothers keeper."

Underlying everything, as ever, was the matter of income, and much business concerned the Township rates. The Minutes open in 1841 with a resolution that
The rates of the house occupied by Mr Joseph Holmes of Underbank be the one half in consideration of its being a school and his great age.

In March 1842 the thorny matter of Settlement raised its head. For centuries parishes had argued with each other as to the place of origin, and hence, settlement of those seeking relief within their boundaries. No one wanted to pay more than they had to and would go to some lengths to keep other parishes' paupers out, or even to off load their own onto the supposed parish of origin. So the Township was prepared to take on the Justices of the Peace over their planned removal of Wm. Sykes from his present Township in Derbyshire to Wooldale, and even to send representatives the other way *To take a journey to Chesterfield and Ripley to make enquiry into the Settlement of Edmund Bower the son of Mathew Bower for whom an order of removal is made from the Township of Codner Park to the Township of Wooldale*

The worthies who made up the Overseers in 1842 were Christopher Moorhouse, George Waites, John Tyas, Joseph Whitehead, David Brammald(?), Eli Exley, William Askham, George Tyas, James Tyas and Thomas Farrar
Later in the same year they were in dispute over another Settlement *That the Order of Removal of John Riley from Golcar to Wooldale be appealed against*
But seemed more accepting of a Cheshire man *It was resolved that the Order of Removal of John Bailey from the Township of Hyde to the Township of Wooldale be left to the discretion of the Overseers*
Until February of the following year, when they seemed to have second thoughts
Resolved that the Overseers act as they may think expedient in the case of *John Bailey removed from Hyde to Wooldale as to whether they prosecute an appeal against the Order of Removal or not.*
Once they were on the Townships' books, it was desirable to find some work for the able bodied, so in May 1843 a meeting of all eligible ratepayers was called
Resolved that the Overseers of The Poor, The Guardians of the Township, the Surveyors of the Highways and the following other ratepayers be a committee to meet every week and that they adopt such measures as they may think fit for employing the poor on the highways

Cases of genuine hardship, however, do seem to have been treated with a rather surprising degree of compassion, as in the case of this poor girl in 1846 *Ann Jane Earnshaw, a deaf and dumb girl, daughter of Geo Earnshaw, residing at Wooldale. It was resolved that of defraying the expenses of sending such girl to the Deaf & Dumb Asylum to London, and all necessary expenses incurred therein shall be incurred out of this Parish's rates*

Though if there was a possibility of recovering money, they wouldn't hesitate to make a claim.
16th April 1842 Meeting resolved that the Trustees of Benjamin Lee be applied to for the legacy due to Mary Dearnley of Dunsley she being a pauper receiving relief from Wooldale Township
And again in November 1840, a small document in the back of the Minute book shows that a similar tactic had already proved successful in the case of Betty Bray
She authorised [and marked with a +] to give the Overseers the legacy received on her behalf from her late father Joseph Bray for repayment of relief received from the Township
No pauper was likely to get anything for nothing, though for some, the Township was a source of income.
21 December 1843 Resolved that handbills be printed to say that an assistant Overseer and Collector is wanted at a salary of £30 a year
When a cattle valuer (an important post judging by the number of times they appear in the Minutes) was wanted in 1866, a vote was necessary. The winner of the princely allowance of five shillings per day was John Beaumont with 24 votes, his rival, Joseph Turner, trailing behind with just 16 supporters.

The Township wasn't all about managing the poor. There were also the highways, where the winds of change were clearly felt in 1842, for example, when a Relieving Officer of the new Huddersfield Union was found to be *compelling the able-bodied paupers of Wooldale* to earn their relief by working on the highways of adjacent parishes. The affront to Wooldale's dignity was enough to warrant a complaint to the Poor Law Commissioners themselves if he didn't desist.
Even cattle valuing could have its darker side, as when Mr Henry Turner was given the task of assessing cattle slaughtered in the Pleuro-Pneumonia outbreak of 1872.

It is easy to conclude that this system was rather harsh and penny-pinching, compared with modern social security provision. But it has to be remembered that this was a small community (less than 4,000 people at the start of these Minutes), and many of those would make little or no contribution to the rateable income. There was no remote "they" to look after those who fell on hard times or were born with disabilities, it was their own neighbours, meeting in public who had to find the money themselves. Perhaps the most remarkable thing is that, in the days before vast central bureaucracies, they did it at all.

THE WORK AT THORNTON LODGE WESLEYAN SUNDAY SCHOOL

in the Yorkshire Dialect

AW 'spect yo'll kno' t' reason o' puttin' this together
On this 'ere sheet to' t' best o' yar endever,
But if yo' dooant awl tell yo' 'at's here,
Its Thornton Lodge New Sunday Schooil idea.

Aw dooant know haw, but this awm sure,
There's plenty we's 'a ta see airt o' t' chapel door;
Tell 'em all alike, boath owd and young,
'Et we're bun' to cum to them when done.

Ef coorse yo' kno' we're nooated far and wide,
An' Lodge fow'k 'el luke on us wi' pride
Becos the' see we all worked 'and i' 'and
Toards this big job we're goin' to put on't 'land.

Yer kno' we meet boath morn' and nooin and neet,
An' oft enuf we're alms agate,
An' then yo'll see its 'ardly reight
Shud there be nobbut seven or eight.

Na'ah yo' can't expect us to do more wark,
'Cos when we'en finished its comin' dark,
Aw wish a too-'a'thre' moor 'ed come,
An' then aw think there'd be moor guid dun.

Aw 'ope yo' wean't be back'ard at comin' forard,
There's plenty yo' can do, so doan't be bothered;
Ony o' yo' wed 'uns 'ud be welcum,
So aw'll gi' yo' all a speshul invitashun.

An' theer's another thing aw'd like to menshun,
Villige gosip allus claims yar fust attenshun,
But aw cu'd tell yer plenty if aw durst,
An' if sum on 'em dus'nt do the'll burst.

Ye' tawk abaat t' Examiner, it isn't in it,
For a secret wi' us isn't safe a minit,
But aw'd better 'od mi' noise an' save mi' puff,
Or else aw'st git i' bother, sure enuf.

There's now't gain'd we' lukin faal and sulkin',
An' sayin' isn't So and So insultin' ;
We're all agreed it isn't woth a little apple,
So we're baan to do 'us best for't chapil.

Of coorse ye' kno' there's plenty o' money owin',
So we thowt we'd tra to mak' a hit wi' towin',
But if it's tru' the'n ovver looaded t' donkey,
We're baan to alter things and shift this monkey.

Aw'll bet yer 'aven't seen sich talent oft
As yar Choir and Wimmen's P.S.A. lot,
An' then there's t' Sunday Schooil lads and lasses cumin',
So we've nooan' been long i' drawin' them in.

Tawk abaart musishuns we'n sum o' t' best,
When the'n had a reight guid rest;
An' yo'll nooan find mony actors loike us,
Go wheer yo'n a'moind, there's nooan afore us.

Then there's 'Choir-maister allus heer,
Puttin' all on us threw t'performance so theer;
Then there's t' young 'uns allus willin',
They'll be alreight aw'l bet a shillin'.

There's plenty more to' numerous to menshun,
That's help't to mak' us sich a repitashun,
An' dooant forget 'utt Sunday Schooil's atteushun
'Es to be conducted bi some not menshuned.

We've plenty willin' workers i' this schooil,
An' some 'at's allus ready to 'act t' fooil,
But w'at we caren't do we'll leave undun,
Well mak a finish if it's nobbut wheear we begun.

If yo'd like to buy a copy o' theeas verses,
A penny isn't mich thro' airt your parses,
It nobbut takes twelve thaasand for fifty paand,
So doan't rush or think the'll just go raand.

An' another thing that ivery on yer kno's,
Ivery little gies a 'elping 'and to t' cause;
Soa git yer 'and daan, no matter 'ar mony,
Its' fo' t' benefit o' t' Chapel, ivery penny.

We 'ope yer nooap sorry w'en yer cum,
An' that yo'll all be as if at hooam,
An' w'en yo' read this 'ere dooan't grumble,
Just think a bit an' sell a dozen bundle,
It's fo' t' benefit o' t' new Chapel.

MEMORIES OF GROWING UP IN THE WAR YEARS.

Jean Lunn recalls a child's-eye view of everyday life on the Home Front in Huddersfield.

My first recollection of any act was when I was about two years old. We lived in a semi -square of buildings off Lockwood Road, ours was the corner house, and of course, like everyone we had our coal put down a hole in the ground, and I can remember my father trying to make me jump this hole - and I can remember being terrified.

The next memory, probably the same day, was him putting me in a pig pen full of piglets at the cattle market. He was a teaser, obviously, but I never got to know him very well as he was "called up" into the army, so he was away a lot. Which brings me to my next memory. We had an Anderson Shelter in our patch of gardens, and when the sirens went we had to dress quickly. My mother was busy with my younger brother of a few months, the memory is of trying to fasten buttons on my" pull ups", the buttons went from ankle to thigh. I didn't do very well. Off we trotted with our gas masks, drinks and food. I remember when we got there the shelter was full and my mother was not well pleased.

I think after that we sat in our cellar on the stone steps with blankets and other things including a stoneware hot water bottle.

The next memory is of going to Huddersfield Station to say goodbye to my father, I think I would be about 5 years then and I think it was probably the last time I saw him. I was absolutely terrified of all the noise in the station and we were standing next to the station when the driver let out the steam valve making a most piercing noise. I can remember crying then.

I think my next memories were when I was seven and we got a telegram to say my father was missing, probably killed in action. It was the 4th December, I was on my way to school, my mother had to go to Emley Moor to tell my Grand parents, we lived in Lockwood at the time. It was a very sad time, everyone crying and upset, and I had some very severe and painful chilblains on my feet. I remember crying for my daddy a lot which upset my mother and my auntie.

When Christmas came and I was opening my presents, I can remember saying "oh look, they have found my daddy, he has sent these presents to Father Christmas, his name is on them" — more tears and explanations. The next memories were of things we had to do without during the rationing, everything was on coupons. I remember dried egg made up for Sunday breakfast and I couldn't eat them, but I had to sit there until I ate them. I couldn't, they made me feel sick and I have never wanted scrambled eggs since . Though in later life I found that I had a reaction to eggs, so haven't eaten any since (which is good for the cholesterol).

People today think that Soya is a new creation, but we had recipes for mock cream made with Soya.

Getting about

As the war ended, rationing didn't, but there was great excitement with bonfires and fireworks. Unfortunately we couldn't join in, we went to my grandparents at Emley Moor. Transport wasn't very good and on coming home, we caught a County bus which only went as far as Waterloo, fuel being scarce. We got onto a trolley bus with slated wooden seats and windows all blue and black but had to wait until the bus was nearly full before it left for Huddersfield.

Cars, buses and trolley buses had very dim lights with most of the head lamps painted black, except for just a small slit to let out the light. Any hand torches had to be the same and you never went anywhere without your gas mask — a thing I hated, with the smell and the fear of not being able to breathe in them. I still can't abide masks on my face although today they are smaller and more user friendly.

Tastes of the time

When going to school, and with rationing still on, we couldn't get sweets and things. I remember cocoa and sugar, if we were lucky, but with nothing but your fingers to dip in — "very hygienic" I must say. We ate raw carrots "very healthy" and Oxo cubes, and, as a real luxury, liquorice root, which ended up like a piece of chewed string.

Being school children, we were allowed free milk, though the bottles were thick and chipped and there weren't any straws. I remember macaroni being used and needless to say, my dislike of spaghetti and macaroni cheese, and most pasties I put down to this. Ugh!

There were quite a lot of static water tanks erected for the for the fire hoses (I would say). One of the winters was quite severe and of course the tank nearest to us was covered in icicles, one of which my brothers decided to suck like an ice lolly. We had been told of course not to eat icicles at all, however he did and became very ill with dysentery, he almost died. He also broke his arm falling into a pretend dugout in the reck where my aunty lived, as she thought she was treating us to exciting times by letting off sparklers, but instead he broke his arm.

At this time we were introduced to toffee apples, just having been so scarce because of the torpedoing of merchant ships. The only fruit we seemed to see was dried apricot and apple rings, and horrible black dried bananas which had to be fried -ugh!

I can remember at school one day sitting at the dinner tables waiting for our lunch which was very late and when it did arrive, all it was were bridge rolls and lard, not butter. I think that happened only once though.

Making ends meet

We used to be measured at school to find out if we were allowed clothing coupons and everyone used to stretch as tall as possible and make their feet longer. If you took adult sizes your parents got extra coupons. I can't remember if we ever did.. I remember a lot of passing around of clothes, shoes no, but I do remember an uncle using bicycle tyres cut into strips to repair worn down shoes, also some shoes called" woodies "made like sandals and the underneath sole having worn out tyres on them.

After my father was killed, my mother had to work. I remember the pension, eleven shillings each for my brother and myself, and, I think, thirty-two shillings for my brother — not a lot. (as today one ten pence piece was is the equivalent of a shilling).

She worked in a grocers shop called "Broughs" and they used to go around outlying districts collecting food orders which were delivered at the weekend. I think she did quite well with spare coupons that weren't used in some houses. I seem to remember a lot of blue bags on the top of our wardrobes, sugar, dried fruit and other things I suppose. It was some of the black market, but who am I, or anyone else, to judge. Her husband gave his life for his country, aged 31 years, so good on you mum, we didn't starve.

East Riding memories

My biological father had relatives in Burton Agnes and we used to go and stay there sometimes. It was a lovely village. A lot of farming went on there and they had a lost of prisoners of war, mainly Italians I think. They used to bring the dairy herd down the main street to pasture, with their yellow spots on their backs. Very pleasant as I remember, chatting to us, some way or another, probably we reminded them of their own children and I wasn't the least frightened of them.

I remember going into Bridlington and Scarborough on the bus at different times. The promenades were empty except for bale after bale of barbed wire to prevent people from going on the beaches, because they were all mined. I had my first taste of water melon there. I had not seen one of these big green things with red stuff inside and can't say I was impressed. I don't remember every having it since.

When my mother remarried we moved house and I went to Longley Hall School. This was very memorable, but I think I will save these memories for another time.

WASH DAY AT GRANDMA'S

(1940's TO 1951)

Howard Robinson shares his childhood memories

As a young child, I was looked after by my Grandma and Grandad Beever during the school holidays. They lived in a three storey stone built weaver's cottage with a stone slate roof, part of a row at Longfield Terrace, Bolster Moor, near Golcar. These cottages were characterised by having rows of mullioned windows to provide maximum light for the weaving process and are typical of many similar properties, still found in plenty around the villages of the Holme and Colne valleys. They lived in this rented property for more than forty years.

I was usually taken on a Sunday night by my parents or sometimes put on the Scapegoat Hill bus early on Monday morning (from the age of five) in Upperhead Row, Huddersfield and left under the care of the conductor. Grandma collected me from the bus stop at the top of Drummer Lane.

Holidays spent at Grandmas were always pleasurable and interesting. One of these interesting days was wash day! It was not just a day but always took longer!

Grandma started the washing process on Sunday night by "scalding" soap in a bucket. She took a bar of yellow carbolic soap and/or a bar of green soap and using a cheese grater, grated a quantity of soap into a bucket of hot water. This was stirred until all the soap had dissolved. Soap powders were available then but they may have been too expensive or too modem for Grandma! This soap solution was left until Monday morning when wash day really started in earnest.
The house fire was lit in the black leaded cast iron range with its oven on one side and a boiler on other to provide hot water. The communal wash house which was at the top of the yard, past the toilet block, had several "set pots" of brick construction. In each "set pot" as the name implies, was set a large metal pot, under which a fire could be lit. Grandma lit this fire by taking a shovel full of burning coals from the house fire, and then quickly carrying these up the yard to the wash house, placing them on a set pot grate and adding more wood and coals, the aim being to establish a good fire quickly. The "set pot" was filled with water from a well outside, which was fed by a small stream. A portion of the dissolved soap was added. This was left until the water was nearly boiling. Then the dirty washing was added. The 'whites' first and these were then left to boil.

Grandma also used a "Jiffy". A wooden square tub on metal legs which was filled with hot water from the "set pot". This was fitted with a lid, underneath which was a metal paddle. This was attached to a lever on top of the lid, so when the lid was closed and by moving the lever on the top from side to side it agitated the washing inside the tub. This mechanical action was designed to extract any remaining dirt, but this was physically hard and hot work. Any stubborn stains were removed by rubbing the garment on a scrubbing or wash board. These were made of corrugated iron set in a wooden frame which had legs so it could be partially immersed inside a wash tub. These wash boards were in great demand in "Skiffle" groups in the fifties and sixties as used by experts such as Lonnie Donegan.

The clean washing was rinsed and then "mangled". Often at this stage, the 'whites' were rinsed in "Dolly Blue" or "Recketts's Bag Blue", a blue dye which was added to the rinse water to make the washing appear whiter! But I can't remember grandma using "Dolly Blue", but my mother certainly did.

Grandma however did starch her linen, along with my Grandad's shirt collars and his "Dicky". She made the starch solution in the traditional way. The starch powder was mixed with a minimum quantity of cold water to form a creamy paste and then boiling water added to produce a slightly opaque starch solution. Items to be

starched were immersed in this solution and the surplus removed by "mangling".

I ought at this stage to explain this "mangling" process! Mangles were usually large cast iron frames fitted with two large wooden rollers which could be turned together using a large wheel on one side. The rollers were held together by a large metal spring on top and the tension could be varied. The washing was passed between the rollers to squeeze out the surplus water. This was not an easy job but one that a grandson could manage with extra effort. It was particularly hard if the washing was in a tangle, as usually was the case after they had been in the "Jiffy". It was much easier and more efficient if the washing could be folded into an even thickness before mangling. Any water removed was collected in a galvanised metal tub.

The wooden rollers eventually wore out and my Grandad Robinson, who was a blacksmith and farrier, used to replace worn out mangle rollers. This was a good sideline, providing extra income at a time when the number of horses needing shoeing had dramatically reduced.

When all the washing had been boiled, rinsed, starched if necessary, "mangled" and folded neatly into a large oval wickerwork clothes basket, they were carried down the yard and hung out to dry on clothes lines strung across the yard in front of the house. The pegs used were those hand made pegs which Gypsies made
and sold door to door. Or if it was raining the clothes were dried on a "clothes horse" or "winter hedge" in front of the fire.

Dry clothes were folded neatly into the clothes basket. Sheets, blankets and towels were then mangled. Grandma had a mangle in the "kitchen" which was kept for this purpose. This was hardly ever used for mangling wet washing.

By this stage the washing process had taken most of the day, although there had been breaks for breakfast, pots of tea and dinner (at lunch time).

However if it had been a good drying day, there may be some time left to start the ironing. Usually it was fairly good for drying at Bolster Moor, because most of the year there was always a breeze and since the clothes lines were at 90 degrees to the prevailing west winds, the washing soon dried.

Ironing was another fascinating experience for a grandson to watch, but I can never remember being given the opportunity to have a go! There was no electricity at Grandma's so the use of an electric iron was out of the question. She used a pair of irons ", now often found painted black and used as ornaments or door stops. The irons were heated in the open fire and when hot enough their bases were covered with a thin polished metal cover which clipped onto the iron to protect the ironing from the possible soot or ash from the fire. Grandma did not have an ironing board but used the large square scrubbed pine table which was at the centre of the living room, sitting under the gas mantle which provided extra light for the times when day light was inadequate. The table top was protected with some old cotton sheeting which provided a smooth surface. Sometimes the iron was used without its polished cover, and she protected the items to be ironed with a slightly damp piece of cotton. This was used if items needed to be pressed, such as Grandad's Sunday suit and trousers.
Sometimes she used a "gas iron". This was of a hollow construction, inside which a gas flame was directed onto the topside of the iron's base. Down each side, near the top were rows of holes down either side, to let the fumes escape. The gas was supplied by a flexible hose which was attached to a gas tap on the living room ceiling. (The ceiling was not plastered but was the underside of the main beams, joists and floor boards of the bedroom floor above. These were reasonably smooth and had been varnished). The gas iron was no doubt easier, as the iron was constantly hot, but the fumes escaping from the iron made it hot work and it was heavy. After ironing the washing was now hung over the fire to air. There was no creel which could be lowered but there was a rope which had been strung between hooks screwed into the two main ceiling beams.

My grandma carried on washing in this way until 1951 when she moved next door to us in Berry Brow, to a house which had the luxury of electricity.

Today washing is so much easier with automatic washing machines, spin driers, clothes driers, and modern lightweight steam irons, but the communal wash house was a place of neighbourliness and its philosophy of helping each other has been lost for ever. That's another story!

WHO'D A THOWT THED A BEEN A FARM BAHT OSSES

Ernest Beaumont

I first heard this said about 1950 when I was working on a farm in the village of Emley.
This took my memory back almost a decade to 1942 when I started working on that same farm as a sixteen year old farmers boy. We milked the cows by hand.
We clipped the sheep with hand shears.
We worked the land with genuine horse power, no electricity or gas ,no television or mobile phones, just shanks pony and heavy horses we had nine.
They were as much part of the farm as the fields we grew the potatoes in. They were Prince and Tommy, Black mare and Little mare, Ruby and Pearl, then some young ones which had not been named yet.
The horses had to do all kinds of jobs , but each one had its particular jobs that it was best suited to.
Prince was a giant, he had a heart like a lion, he was the one we used when there was some extra heavy work to do, and was usually used as a trace-horse ,that meant that if there were some loads to pull which were too heavy for one horse he would be yoked in front of them with some chains to help them.
At harvest and hay time he would be backward and forwards all day pulling these heavy loads from the low lying fields.
Tommy was only a medium sized horse, but he was used- for all the general farm work, into the muck cart shafts every morning to muck out the mistles, into the fields to fetch a load of kale or turnips for cattle feed, he was a quiet one and we all liked him so he got more than his fair share of work., Black mare, she was not to be trusted, she would set off walking when we did not want her to, her mind and her feet wandered all around anywhere, due to this she was usually paired up with another horse for field work, ploughing or other such like jobs Little mare was a gem, she was usually used for jobs which needed one steady horse which was sure of foot scruffeling between the rows of potatoes ---- turnips etc, we never needed reins or lines with her ,we just talked to her,(come halve and such like), she would prick up her ears and listen --- softly softly describes her nature.
Ruby and pearl were both field workers, they didn't take well to cart shafts, we once used ,or tried to use Ruby, in a pair of shafts but she laid down and broke them.
A tractor arrived on the farm during the fourties it was a Fordson Standard with wooden tyres , but it was the start of the finish for the horses. Prince was the first to go, he went to be a trace horse, pulling coal carts from Batley station up into the town.
Ruby and Pearl weren't long to follow, tractors soon saw the field workers off.
Black mare had a foal, mother and son were sold together. Tommy stayed with us for a long time, into the fifties, we always seemed to find plenty of work for him.
The young horses had a bad time in the winter of 47', thy were fetched away unbroken in the spring of 48.
When I think that only a few years before this the horseman had a full time job, everything or nearly everything, was driven by genuine horsepower, we just had one little petrol engine that used to run the corn mill, anything else was driven by man power.
The horsemans job was seven days a week, in fact the old man at the farm used to tell us that he once lived in a hay loft over the horses. Now caring for the horses, if they were inside in the winter, they were all to feed and water in the early hours, they would be let out of the stable for a drink, the horseman would then clean out their stall and throw back the bedding, fill the racks with hay and put corn or bran into the troughs according to the work they were doing, when all this was done the horseman could have his breakfast, time was when the horses were much more important than the horseman.
After breakfast they were to brush down their front end would be full of hay seeds, their back end a bit dirty where they had been laid down, but when they went out they had to look as if they had had a good wash and brush up, the harness took some caring for as well something always needed cleaning or mending ,their feet were to see to, they went to the black smith for new shoes but between times he had to see to them himself ,all this was to do before he took them out to work, and if the work was ploughing or some other hard work the horses may be changed at dinner time but the man wasn't changed and he had to see the horses were fed and watered before he ate himself.
When he wandered his weary way home in the evening, the horses still came first, and if he wasn't too tired he might get a pint before he went to bed, but as we started (WHO'D A THOWT THED A BEEN A FARM BAHT OSSES, within two or three years combines, paraffin and diesel had taken over.
I still think it was a better life following the horses than riding up and down all day with ear muffs and a dust mask on you don't see anything nowadays , the horses would step over a birds nest, but a tractor will run over anything.
There's a word for it its called PROGRESS.

SOCIETY NEWS

OBITUARY

This year saw the passing of one our long - standing members, Mary Ellis. In this short obituary, Ruby Coull offers some personal memories, and we reprint a short biographical article written by Miss Ellis for the Journal, a few years ago.

From an early age Mary attended Huddersfield Parish Church, along with her parents, where her father was a Church Warden, and later she became secretary to the Parochial Church Council, which she served for many years. She took an interest in the Girl Guide movement over the years, latterly becoming a District Commissioner.

A member of the National Trust for 30 years, she was a founder member of the West Yorkshire Group and a committee member, planning events and outings for members for which she will be remembered with gratitude. As well as belonging to Huddersfield Local History Group, she attended classes at Shepley, organised by the late Mr Senior, with whom she was a firm friend.

Most of all, Mary loved the game of cricket and was a member of Yorkshire Cricket Club, travelling to Leeds and Scarborough to see the games. Whenever she saw a match being played in any of the villages around Huddersfield, it was a source great delight to her.

Until the last two years, Mary enjoyed excellent health and, I think it is fair to say, had "good innings". Well played Mary!

REMINISCENCES

by Mary Ellis

Perhaps it is that I was born in Spaines Road, not in the road but in a house and the back garden went up to the fence of the Huddersfield Cricket and Football Ground, and I think that was why I have always been interested in Cricket While we lived there as a family I got scarlet fever and in those days the only form of isolation was that I was put in a bedroom by myself and a cotton sheet was hung over the door and it was dipped in disinfectant I could look out of the window and see my friend Joyce being taken to a cricket match. When I was well again my Father took me to a match, probably a County match as Yorkshire played at Fartown in those days. I used to go round in the early evening and watch the teams practice. I kept the scores of County matches in a little book, a penny notebook and a penny pencil bought at Emily Hartley's shop in Birkby.

When I went away to School I tried to get into the Cricket team and bowled the School Captain with one of my googlies, a shock for her, but that term I caught my thumb in a window which dropped on it, so no more cricket that term.

After I left school, along with a friend I joined the Huddersfield Ladies and played on Paddock cricket ground and various other local grounds, but only for one season, as Rosamund and I got caught up in the Girl Guides and there wasn't time for both hobbies. But I met a Yorkshire County Lady member and I was hooked, A County Member and able to go to County matches and Test Matches at Park Avenue, Headingley, Fartown, Sheffield, this was one foot in heaven. I was actually at the Test Match at Headingley when Bill Bowes bowled Don Bradman for 304 ... We cheered and cheered and stood on the seats in our excitement The great Bradman bowled by our Bill Bowes from Yorkshire.

So having been a Yorkshire County member for over 50 years and enjoyed Cricket, especially in Scarborough at the Festival I still go to matches and enjoy the local League matches, sitting in the shade by the river in Holmfirth and watching the local team, a very pleasant way to spend a summer afternoon. Perhaps on my coffin will be "R.S.P." rain stopped play, and then I may be in a green field watching Woolley, Hirst, Rhodes, Wilfred Sutcliffe Hobbs, Wyatt, Leyland, Hutton.

Who knows....

Woodsome Hall

Although this year's Christmas dinner has moved to Meltham, Woodsome has been our seasonal venue for over a decade. Its unique historical ambience and long held attraction for local historians made it a very special place, especially for those who struggled for so long to be allowed access. We reprint here a short article from 1990 which explains some of that special quality.

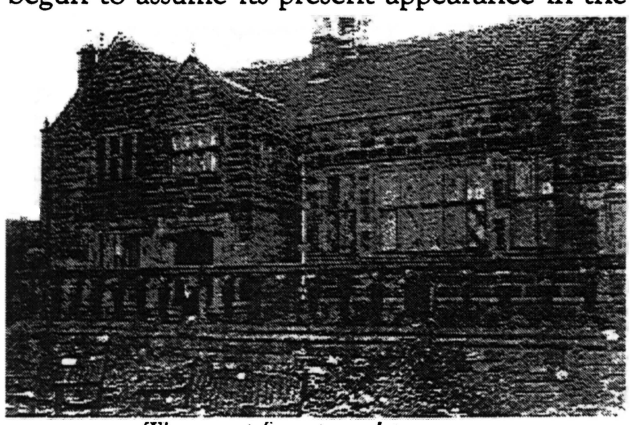
Woodsome Revisited

K Brockhill

To Sir Nikolaus Pevsner, surveying all the buildings of England, it was a "picturesque and mellow Elizabethan house". To an earlier, Victorian, writer it seemed a "typical example of the stone built 17th century mansions which harmonise so admirably with the Yorkshire landscape".[1] But to the local historians of Huddersfield it has always been rather more important than that. Typical its architecture may be, and picturesque it most certainly is, but in a district that is "not so rich in antiquarian treasures as some parts of England" -as one Victorian writer coyly put it, Woodsome occupies a special place, and it has long been an ambition of this society to gain admission for its members.

Success was frustratingly elusive, but finally came in December 1988 when our tenth anniversary dinner was held in these most appropriate surroundings. This was a memorable occasion for all concerned, but no novelty to a house that has been entertaining local historians since at least that August day in 1867, when members of the newly formed Huddersfield Archaeological and Topographical Association made their inaugural excursion through Woodsome and Almondbury.

The object of their attention, and ours, had begun to assume its present appearance in the mid 16th century, when Arthur Kaye encased the original timber-framed house in stone, added stone chimneys and plaster ceilings and "dyd glace all the wyndows".[2] There was still much to do as the family's status grew with their developing estates. Arthur's son John had twelve children and before moving to Slaithwaite, found that "lakk of Rowme" forced further improvements. One of those children, John, in his turn made a significant move at the end of the century, when new extensions were erected around a courtyard behind the existing hall. Graced with a colonnade of "short stumpy Tuscan columns", this remains one of the house's most distinctive features.



The east front and terrace.

The dates of this early 17th century work are uncertain, but they appear to have concluded the main period of building. Further extensions were comparatively small and, despite their elevation to the baronetcy in 1641, the Kayes seemed content with their residence. This, together with the largely absentee landlordship of their successors, the Legge family, Earls of Dartmouth, preserved the Hall as the predominantly Elizabethan mansion we see today.

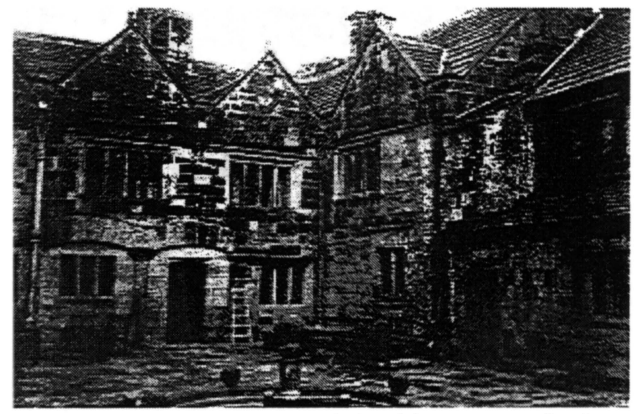
That we can still see an Elizabethan mansion in a comparatively rural setting, however, owes as much to 20th century sport as to aristocratic restraint. Canon Hulbert, in his *Annals of the Church and Parish of Almondbury*, published in 1882, noted approvingly that, following the death of the fourth Earl in 1853, his successors had become more frequent visitors to a house that had largely become the preserve of tenants. The fourth Earl had been of a "very retired disposition", but the new Earl and Countess had actively cultivated "more genial relations" with the local Population. It *was* not however destined to last for very much longer. In 1906 an "Elizabethan and Shakespearian village pageant"

celebrated the past at Woodsome but within a few years the Hall was to embark on a very different sort of future.

Golf was an expanding sport that already occupied several courses in the Huddersfield area, but, by 1921, the *Examiner* was reporting that rumours connecting Woodsome with the sport were beginning to take substance in the plans of one Major Trestrail of Kirkburton. In October of that year, the paper covered a "numerously and influentially attended meeting" that was held at the George Hotel to consider proposals for a new course. Enthusiasm was running high and the meeting agreed to form a new club to lease, and possibly purchase, the "interesting and picturesque" Hall and 135 acres of land. For those able to participate, this offered a mouth-watering prospect of developments on American style country club lines, with tennis courts, bowling greens and putting courses spreading around the historic club house. Fortunately, from the historian's point of view at least, these plans did not come to fruition.

The Hall duly changed hands, but most of its contents were sold elsewhere. Sales of furniture and other effects were held in Huddersfield and London in the early months of 1922 with the pictures meriting a separate sale of their own. Two well known paintings from the Hall were acquired by the Tolson Museum, but much furniture and a brass trumpet known as the "Luck of Woodsome Hall" came under the auctioneer's hammer, at prices that would turn a modern collector green with envy. At one sale realising £800, the most valuable piece of furniture raised a mere 44 guineas. The grounds meanwhile were converted at such a rapid pace that the first nine holes were opened for play on Easter Monday, 1922.

All eighteen holes are now a long established part of the local scene and no modern visitors could expect to be welcomed by the Earl of Dartmouth himself, as members of the British Association were in 1873. Our own second visit, in the summer of 1989, was conducted by the Club Secretary around the remaining landscaped grounds of the 18th century and through several rooms in the Hall itself. Much of the furniture referred to by Hulbert is long gone, as are the "curious matchlocks, swords, pikes and other warlike implements" noted by the visiting antiquarians in 1861. But panelled walls, fine



Woodsome's courtyard, looking towards the rear of the great hall.

plaster ceilings and some impressive fireplaces still remain and it does not require a great act of imagination to conjure up episodes from Woodsome's past. Especially at Christmas, when sitting in the galleried hall, beside the immense fireplace with its distinct inscription of the builders christian names, one thinks of the scene in January 1673 when Sir John Kaye summoned the dissenting ministers, Heywood and Richardson before him, and they in turn recoiled in righteous disgust from the "feeding, drinking and revelling" taking place round the great hall. Or when, after enjoying a substantial modern Christmas dinner, one hears the guest of honour speak of that remarkable double wedding four centuries ago, which required 3 calves, 6 ewes, 17 pigs, 2 red deer hinds, 1 ox, 40 couples of coneys, 3 swans, 6 turkeys, 26 capons and other birds too numerous to mention to satisfy the assembled Kaye appetites.

Huddersfield's pre industrial revolution history is at best thinly spread and few places can offer such a tangible concentration of that past as Woodsome does. Or even for that matter the intangible past. On a dark winter's night among the creaking trees and silent greens it is tempting to ponder the unanswerable question; did Rimington's unquiet ghost really return as a robin to the "haunted" room upstairs? Whether he did or not, Woodsome Hall will always merit a return visit from the local historians of Huddersfield.

1. Wheater, W. *Some Historic Mansions of Yorkshire and their Associations*, 1889.
2. Redmands, George, *The Heirs of Woodsome and other Essays in Local History*, 1982, This gives a useful summary of the Cl6th ~ Cl7th history, while an article by E. Law in the current *Old West Riding* (Vol. 9, 1989) discusses some correspondence relating to the estate in the less well documented Cl8th.

BAKESTONES

by David Shore

BACKSTONE CLOUGH

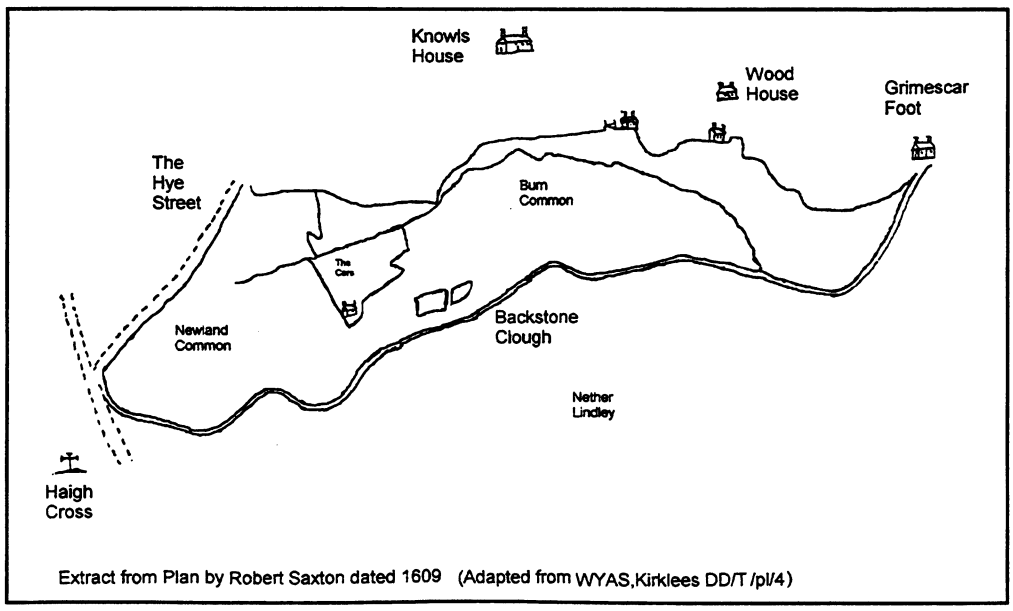
Oats was the main cereal crop in this area. It could survive cool and damp conditions better than other cereals, and as a bonus its straw provided a relatively nutritious feed for cattle and horses. It was eaten both as "havercake" (oatcakes) and as porridge. (Jennings: Pennine Valley) Oatcakes could be cooked on a bakestone or *backston* as it was more generally known. Bakestones were common in areas where peat or turf was burnt as fuel, in particular the Pennine areas of Lancashire and Yorkshire.

Bakestones were made of stone, shale or iron, but in the Saddleworth region they were produced from a shaley mudstone, which was quarried in large blocks, known as a fly-wing. These blocks were then split into leaves of 112 "to 314" thickness, then shaped with a knife into a basically square shape of up to 2' square. The thin slabs were then immersed in water to prevent drying out, which would have led to the shale breaking up. To produce the hard material needed for cooking, the leaves were fired in a makeshift kiln, for 2 to 3 days.

Bakestones were produced from at least the fourteenth century, and the trade appears to have concentrated on Delph in Saddleworth, especially after the seventeenth century, but there is place-name evidence to suggest that bakestones were produced locally before this. Steven Wood has found documentary evidence of a bakestone quarry in a field near Stanbury (Baxton Delves) and a drawing by Robert Saxton dated 1609 suggests that bakestones were being produced near the Halifax and Huddersfield boundary.

To put the Clough in its present setting, the stream is crossed by the Halifax Road (A629) in Birchencliffe, below Ainley Top, and the car park of the hotel Briar Court lies over the culverted stream. To the east of Halifax Road the stream joins Brook Graining in the Grimescar Valley to become the earlier Parish boundary between Halifax and Huddersfield and also the wapentake boundary.
Westwards of Halifax Road the Clough is now enclosed by housing, with access only through private gardens, but the Clough is surprisingly deep-up to 50' and now well wooded, being recently made the subject of a tree preservation order.

Bakestone production is just one of the many industries once carried out in the now peaceful Grimescar valley, with a tile kiln which made roofing tiles for the Roman fort at Slack, coal mines, a tannery and a woollen cloth mill.



Extract from Plan by Robert Saxton dated 1609 (Adapted from WYAS,Kirklees DD/T /pl/4)

YORKSHIRE QUAKER HERITAGE PROJECT

Pamela Cooksey

Local historians with an interest in the Society of Friends and those associated with it will be delighted to learn of the establishing of the Yorkshire Quaker Heritage Project. The aims of this project are to increase awareness of the Quaker archives and Printed Collections held in Yorkshire and to broaden access to these. This involves the publication of a Research Guide to Quakerism in Yorkshire, (hopefully this will be available by the end of this year), and the creation of a Web site. These developments should prove to be of interest to a wide range of researchers, both amateur and professional.

The Web site provides information on the origins of Quakerism in Yorkshire, lists of Quaker Meetings and Meeting Houses, the records produced by Quaker Meetings, a register of research interests, the details of Quaker Collections held by the project partners, (these being the Universities of Hull, Leeds, York and the Borthwick Institute), and associated Repositories and, most importantly, details of the conditions of access to these.

Already available is an on-line database providing a Location Register which describes the various Quaker Collections and the Archives and the other Repositories in Yorkshire where they are held. This database also provides information on the Meetings of the Society of Friends, Meeting libraries and Quaker book collections, search aids and some associated non-Quaker sources.

A second database offers a Name Index which will enable one to trace references to specific individuals and families within the Monthly Meetings Minute Books, Records of Sufferings and Membership lists. The project is, of course, at a very early stage so at present only Kelk, (later Bridlington), Elloughton, (later Cave), Ostrick and Cave, (later Hull), Malton, Scarborough and Pickering are covered. The intention is that Brighouse (this includes Huddersfield), Knaresborough, Leeds, Settle, Thirsk, York and the Yorkshire Quarterly Meeting will be added later.
The project Home Page can be found on www.hull.ac.uk/lib/archives/quaker

Huddersfield Local History Society

Programme 2002 - 2003

30 September	*Place Names of Huddersfield* Dr. George Redmonds
* 12 October	Study Day at Newsome South Methodist Church *Aspects of Medical History* Also incorporating the Annual General Meeting
28 October	*The Denvilles on Stage in Huddersfield* Mrs Ida Frost
25 November	*Yorkshire History Makers* Dr. John Hargreaves
*11 December	Annual Dinner Speaker John Hudson. *David Browns - A Family Business*
27 January	*West Yorkshire Luddite Rebellion* John Oldham
24 February	*Kirklees History Service* Richard Butterfield
31 March	*Honley Old and New* Peter Bray
28 April	*Pigs 'n' Privvies* Lesley Kipling
19 May	*A Soldiers Life - Some Yorkshire Cavalry Men in India 1820-1850* John Rumsby
*18 June	Excursion. Details still to be arranged.

All Meetings except those marked * will take place in the Junior Library, Huddersfield Library at 7.30 pm.

The 2003-2004 series of talks will commence on Monday 29th September 2003 Membership Subscriptions: Single £6 Joint £10 are due at the start of the session

Hon. Secretary: Mrs Freda Hollingworth
62 Greenhill Bank Road, New Mill, Holmfirth HD9 1ER

BOOKSHELF

With nostalgia so dominating the local history market, it is refreshing to see any book that addresses a serious academic topic — especially when the author is one of our best known local historians. *Comrades in conscience: the story of an English community's opposition to the Great War* by Cyril Pearce tells the story of one of Huddersfield's more significant, if little known, contributions to national history.

As with many other British towns, Huddersfield's residents in 1914 expressed initial opposition to the war. Numerous meetings, including a remarkable one in New Mill where virtually the entire adult population attended to urge neutrality, expressed opposition. But as the War progressed, people's views changed, though not always in ways they would have chosen. Schemes such as "compulsory voluntaryanism" by which local firms, and even local authorities "released" or refused to employ men of military age increased the number of recruits and turned feelings against those who refused to serve Huddersfield, however, for reasons that are explored at length in this book contained enough resistance to be known as "the hotbed of pacifism", a process that came to a head with the tribunal hearing of Arthur Gardner under the Military Service Act of *1916*.

The detail is extensive and scholarly, but the style is accessible. A good read for anyone with an interest in Huddersfield's somewhat idiosyncratic character.

Slightly later in time, but no less individual in its own way, was the development of bus services in the area. The story of one small, but well known company is told by Peter Cardno and Stephen Harling in *Baddeleys of Holmfirth: an independent bus and coach enterprise*. Starting in the buccaneering days of the 1920s, when companies competed furiously for routes (even putting spies on each others vehicles), when vehicles like the two "yellow peril "doubledeckers reduced passengers to nervous wrecks ("severely shaken "was the description of one such pioneering passenger) and the running down of a police inspector brought a touch of the Keystone Cops, the Baddeley Family built up an extensive business.

Surviving the tragedy of the 1944 flood, when the company cashier was drowned outside Towngate garage, the business expanded to include lorries and taxis as well as buses and coaches. The book contains a wealth of technical detail, but is interesting for its human stories and is not just one for the "omnibologist" (see p59!)

Another Holme Valley history makes its story truly local. *Upperthong then and now* by the Upperthong Women's Institute gives a potted history of 88 individual houses and their occupants, in a work published to mark the WI branch's 30th anniversary.

The presence of the National Mining Museum at Caphouse is a permanent reminder of an industry that once dominated the eastern outskirts of the district and the latest booklet from the prolifica pen of John Goodchild explains, in some detail, what existed *Before the National Coal Mining Museum: a new history of Caphouse Colliery and Denby Grange Collieries*. Coal mines had existed in the area from at least the fourteenth century, but this is largely the story of the Lister-Kaye Family of Denby Grange, and their development of the pits around Flockton on the Flockton Thick and Thin seams.

Published by the Wakefield Historical Society and City of Wakefield, the booklet packs plenty of detail about Denby Grange mansion, its nearby colliery and Shuttle Eye.

Another part of the former industrial infrastructure is also enjoying some limelight at present. Unlike collieries, however, canals have found a new role in the booming leisure industry and the Huddersfield Narrow has made it to the national stage.

It seems a cliche now, with the benefit of hindsight, but for many years restoration really was "An *impossible dream*" (to the enthusiasts that is and a nightmare to those who had thankfully seen the back of it)

The Canal Society's video, illustrates the trials, battles, and sheer hard work that since 1974 has re-opened 74 locks, tunnelled under factories, ploughed through town centres and transformed an open sewer into a major tourist attraction, fit to be opened by the Prince of Wales. Narrated by Timothy West, and using archive as well as current footage it is well worth a viewing. If words are preferred, there is also an immensely detailed book written by Keith Gibson and published by Tempus Publishing. *Pennine dreams: the story of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal*. This tells the story in straight narrative form, from the meeting at The George Hotel in 1793 to discuss the proposed canal, through its construction and the working years to the regal re-opening in 2001. A large part of the book is devoted to a step-by-step account of the restoration, which makes for some serious reading for the non-specialist, but a glance at some of the photos, particularly Stalybridge and Slaithwaite town centres and the Sellers Engineers tunnel is enough to show that these enthusiasts really did achieve a great deal and overcome "impossible" obstacles.

"Impossible dream" might also describe the genesis of our Society's latest publication. After almost 30 years, three remarkable coincidences and a lot of dogged determination, the story of Newsome's alternative medical practitioner has finally been published. The story behind *The diary of a quack doctor being the last diary of John Swift, Aurist of Newsome, Huddersfield 1784-1851* is almost as remarkable as the diary itself.

Found by its saviour and future editor, Jennifer Stead, in a chance visit to a secondhand shop, its significance might still have been lost but for a chance find on a visit to an elderly Newsome resident, and the fortuitous return of a great grandson to the area after many years in the south.

But such coincidences have been harnessed by much research and scholarship to produce not only the biography of an intriguing entrepreneur and his family, but also an insight into the shady world of Victorian fringe medicine. If someone like Swift could so easily set up as an ear doctor, one dreads to think of the other "amateurs" who no doubt treated even more serious conditions among the poor and desperate.

Editor: Mr. K. Brockhill,
52 Croft Gardens,
Birkby,
Huddersfield.

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